BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

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Current Statistics ◆ August 2007

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities retreated (-2.9%, *seasonally adjusted*) in June after surging in the previous month.** Residential permits declined (-12.6%), while increases in the industrial (+93.3%), institutional (+22.2%) and commercial (+12.7%) sectors pushed planned spending on non-residential projects up 18.5%.

  In Kelowna, permits soared 32.3%, while Victoria (+7.7%) experienced a more moderate increase. On the other hand, Vancouver (-4.8%) and Abbotsford (-43.8%) saw the value of permits slip. Nationally, permits inched down 0.4%. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

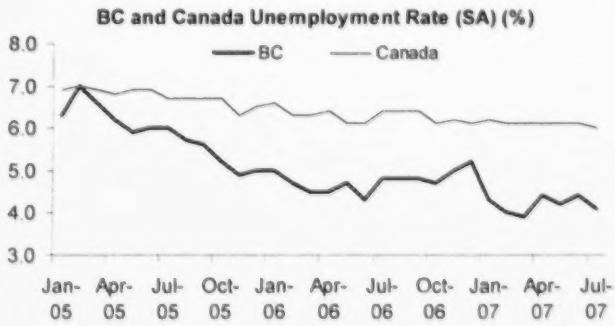
- **British Columbia's unemployment rate fell to 4.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in July.** The improvement in the jobless rate occurred because the province's labour force shrank 0.4%, more than offsetting the effect of a slight drop (-0.1%) in the number of jobs. Employment growth in the province has stalled in the summer months, with the total number of people working inching down in both June and July.

  The province's goods sector employed 2.4% fewer people in July. The manufacturing (-2.0%) and construction (-5.5%) industries both shed jobs. Employment edged down modestly (-0.2%) in forestry, fishing & mining, as a downturn in the resource industries continued.

  The service sector, which employs eight out of ten workers, boosted employment by 0.5%. Retail & wholesale trade (+3.0%) continued to surge ahead, and there were more job opportunities in industries such as management & administration (+3.4%) and professional, scientific & technical services (+2.7%). Transportation & warehousing (+1.5%), public administration (+1.5%), and finance, insurance & real estate (+1.4%) also took on more workers.

  There were 0.4% fewer jobs in the public sector, as both the education (-6.8%) and health & social service (-1.2%) industries pared down their workforce. Private sector employment inched up 0.2%. Full-time employment increased 1.4%, but there were 5.8% fewer people working in part-time jobs. Self-employment continued to decline, falling 0.8%.

  Canada's unemployment rate dropped to 6.0% *(seasonally adjusted)* in July, its lowest point since 1974. Alberta (3.3%) continued to record the lowest jobless rate in the country, while Newfoundland & Labrador (13.6%) and PEI (10.5%) continued to experience double-digit unemployment. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*



- **Exports of BC products slipped 3.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in June following a 5.1% decline in the previous month.** The value of exports fell in all major categories. Energy exports tumbled 13.1% and exports of agriculture & fishing products (-2.7%), industrial & consumer goods (-1.9%) and forest products (-1.5%) were also down. However, international shipments of machinery, equipment & automotive products increased 1.5% in June.

Exports to the United States were virtually unchanged (-0.1%), as a 3.5% jump in forest product exports offset declines in the value of other products shipped south of the border.

International shipments to countries other than the US (-9.1%) were also weak. Energy (-27.7%), forest products (-8.2%) and industrial & consumer goods (-1.8%), which together account for the bulk of overseas exports, all slumped. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **BC manufacturing shipments slipped 0.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in June, marking the fourth monthly decline since January.** A 2.3% drop in shipments by manufacturers of non-durable goods was largely due to a downturn in the paper industry (-5.0%), where shipments fell for a second straight month. Food manufacturers posted only modest growth (+0.3%), while shipments by producers of plastics & rubber (-2.5%), beverages & tobacco (-1.9%) and chemicals (-1.5%) slumped.

  In the durables sector, shipments were up 1.3% as the wood industry bounced back (+2.4%) from a slowdown in May. Manufacturers of computers & electronic products (+3.0%), furniture (+2.2%) and fabricated metals (+1.8%) also posted solid gains. However, shipments by producers of non-metallic minerals fell 2.9%. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **New motor vehicle sales fell (-2.0%, *seasonally adjusted*) for the second straight month in June.** The drop in sales was due to a decline in truck sales which overwhelmed a modest increase in the number of new cars sold in the province. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Wholesale sales in the province increased 4.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in June.** Sales by wholesalers of building supplies were flat, and dealers in computers & electronics and office & professional equipment had another slow month, but most other wholesalers posted solid gains. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

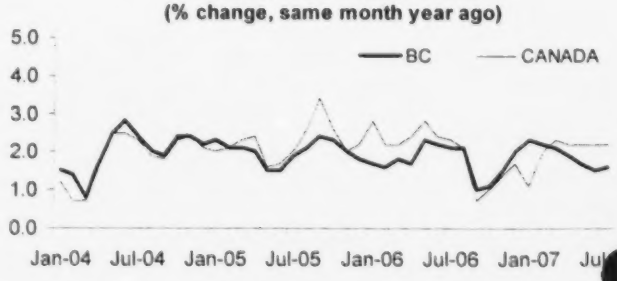
- **Total retail sales in BC were virtually unchanged in June, holding firm at $4.7 billion (*seasonally adjusted*), as gains made by food retailers (+2.1%) were offset by a drop in sales observed in the automotive sector (-1.5%).** Sales fell sharply at pharmacies (-2.2%) but expanded moderately at building & outdoor home supply stores (+0.4%). Business at general merchandise stores (+0.1%), miscellaneous retailers (+0.1%), furniture, home furnishings and electronics stores (-0.1%), and clothing and accessory stores (-0.1%) was flat in June. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Lumber production at BC's sawmills fell 7.2% through the first six months of 2007 compared to the same period a year earlier.** Shipments of lumber by sawmills were down (-8.6%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate rose to 1.6% in July, up 0.1 percentage points over the rate recorded in June.** The recent drop in the price of energy (-2.4%) had a dampening effect on the economy's overall inflation rate. Excluding energy, the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 2.0%.

  The price of food rose 2.6% as both grocery purchases (+1.8%) and restaurant fare (+3.9%) were more costly. Shelter was more expensive (+2.1%) as the price of both rented (+1.1%) and owned (+3.0%) accommodations continued to increase. The price of alcohol & tobacco (+2.9%), recreation, education & reading materials (+2.5%) as well as health & personal care (+2.2%) increased while the price of clothing & footwear was down (-1.5%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

BC and Canada Inflation Trend
(% change, same month year ago)



MONTHLY STATISTICS

	UNITS	REFERENCE PERIOD	CURRENT			MONTHLY AVERAGE YEAR-TO-DATE	
			LATEST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM LAST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO	AMOUNT	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO
PRICES							
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	Jul '07	110.5	0.2	1.6	109.8	1.9
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	Jul '07	110.7	0.2	2.0	110.0	2.3
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	Jul '07	110.1	0.2	0.8	109.7	1.4
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	Jul '07	112.0	0.1	2.2	111.2	2.0
Consumer Price Index-USA	1982-84=100	Jul '07	208.3	0.0	2.4	206.1	2.5
Industry Price Index-Canada	1997=100	Jul '07	115.6	-0.7	-0.3	116.9	3.1
LABOUR							
Unemployment Rate (SA)*-BC	Percent	Jul '07	4.1	(4.4)	(4.8)	4.2	(4.6)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-Canada	Percent	Jul '07	6.0	(6.1)	(6.4)	6.1	(6.3)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-USA	Percent	Jul '07	4.6	(4.5)	(4.8)	4.5	(4.7)
Unemployed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Jul '07	97.7	-6.9	-11.2	99.2	-6.8
Employed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Jul '07	2,257.6	-0.1	2.8	2,256.9	3.2
Labour Force (SA)-BC	Thousand	Jul '07	2,355.3	-0.4	2.2	2,356.2	2.8
Participation Rate (SA)-BC	Percent	Jul '07	65.9	(66.3)	(65.6)	66.2	(65.5)
Regular EI Benefits Paid	$Million	Jun '07	44.6	-14.5	-8.3	62.6	-6.5
Regular EI Beneficiaries	Persons	Jun '07	33,410	-9.4	-10.9	43,595	-11.7
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	Jul '07	744.19	0.5	3.2	743.43	3.2
Wages and Salaries-BC (SA)	$Million	Mar '07	6,981.0	0.4	7.0	6,950.5	6.9
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC	1996=100	Jun '07	124.8	0.6	3.9	123.7	3.5
PRODUCTION-B.C.							
Lumber-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Jun '07	3,224.5	2.0	-4.0	3,317.6	-7.2
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Jun '07	363	-4.2	-15.2	394	-2.8
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Jun '07	82	-5.7	-14.6	82	-9.3
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Jun '07	152	-4.4	-9.5	157	-3.3
Coal-Tonnes	Thousand	May '07	2,258.0	8.7	40.5	1,854.4	6.1
Oil-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Apr '07	122.9	-17.0	-12.2	131.4	-4.1
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres	Million	Feb '07	2,777.9	-3.2	4.6	2,824.2	1.5
Electric Power Generated	GW.h	May '07	5,573.4	2.1	20.4	5,878.5	16.4
Manufacturing Shipments (SA)	$Million	Jun '07	3,496.0	-0.3	-1.0	3,494.9	-0.6
GENERAL							
Housing Starts-All Areas BC(SAAR)**	Thousand	Jul '07	35.0	-8.9	-16.3	36.8	-2.3
Housing Starts-USA (SAAR)**	Thousand	Jul '07	1,381.0	-6.1	-20.9	1,451.0	-25.9
Building Permits-BC (SA)	$Million	Jun '07	1,305.5	-2.9	26.3	1,098.9	22.4
Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Jun '07	807.6	-12.6	15.0	726.6	23.5
Non-Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Jun '07	497.9	18.5	50.3	372.3	20.4
Retail Sales (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Jun '07	4,728.9	0.0	8.2	4,644.5	7.4
Wholesale Trade (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Jun '07	4,615.5	4.8	11.0	4,409.4	5.5
Tourism Room Revenues (SA)-BC	$Thousand	Apr '07	164,058	0.0	10.8	163,111	12.6
Business Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Jun '07	44	4.8	-8.3	41	-29.3
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Jun '07	553	-8.7	-14.4	588	-7.8
Incorporations-BC	Number	Jul '07	2,455	-13.0	3.8	2,613	-0.1
Exports Originating in BC (SA)	$Million	Jun '07	2,653.2	-3.8	-10.8	2,768.5	-2.7

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*SA indicates seasonal adjustment.

**SAAR indicates seasonally adjusted at annual rates.

Brackets () indicate that rates are shown instead of percentage changes.

ANNUAL STATISTICS

	UNITS	YEAR				PERCENT CHA		
		2006	2005	2004	2003	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-
PRICES								
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	108.1	106.3	104.2	102.2	1.7	2.0	2.0
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	108.0	106.0	104.0	102.0	1.9	1.9	2.0
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	108.5	106.9	104.6	102.2	1.5	2.2	2.3
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	109.1	107.0	104.7	102.8	2.0	2.2	1.8
Consumer Price Index-USA*	1982-84=100	201.6	195.3	188.9	184.0	3.2	3.4	2.7
Industry Price Index-Canada*	1997=100	113.8	111.2	109.5	106.2	2.3	1.6	3.1
LABOUR								
Unemployment Rate-BC	Percent	4.8	5.9	7.2	8.0			
Unemployment Rate-Canada	Percent	6.3	6.8	7.2	7.6			
Unemployment Rate-USA*	Percent	4.6	5.1	5.5	6.0			
Unemployed-BC	Thousand	109.6	132.9	159.2	176.0	-17.5	-16.5	-9.5
Employed-BC	Thousand	2,195.5	2,130.5	2,062.7	2,014.7	3.1	3.3	2.4
Labour Force-BC	Thousand	2,305.1	2,263.4	2,221.9	2,190.7	1.8	1.9	1.4
Participation Rate-BC	Percent	65.7	65.6	65.5	65.6			
Total EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	1,564.2	1,650.3	1,764.0	1,831.3	-5.2	-6.4	-3.7
Regular EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	723.7	837.4	960.4	1,059.5	-13.6	-12.8	-9.4
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	726.02	704.49	686.74	683.68	3.1	2.6	0.4
Wages and Salaries-BC*	$Million	80,805.2	74,448.5	69,383.5	65,310.1	8.5	7.3	6.2
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC*	1996=100	120.0	116.2	113.3	109.6	3.3	2.6	3.4
PRODUCTION-B.C.								
Lumber-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	41,050.7	41,012.9	39,879.3	36,030.9	0.1	2.8	[redacted]
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	4,736	4,932	4,724	4,762	-4.0	4.4	[redacted]
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	1,059	1,076	1,135	1,186	-1.6	-5.2	-4.3
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	1,960	1,877	1,841	1,733	4.4	2.0	6.2
Coal-Tonnes*	Thousand	21,131.0	25,571.0	27,082.0	23,061.0	-17.4	-5.6	17.4
Oil-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	1,670.6	1,765.7	2,019.0	2,168.2	-5.4	-12.5	-6.9
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres*	Million	35,291.7	31,892.8	31,201.3	29,483.4	10.7	2.2	5.8
Electric Power Generated*	GW.h	62,021.4	67,811.2	60,495.6	63,050.9	-8.5	12.1	-4.1
Solid Mineral Shipments	$Million	5,620.4	4,924.8	3,674.5	2,913.5	14.1	34.0	26.1
Farm Cash Receipts**	$Million	2,342.2	2,390.4	2,401.7	2,283.3	-2.0	-0.5	5.2
Manufacturing Shipments*	$Million	41,974.0	40,960.3	42,303.5	39,691.0	2.5	-3.2	6.6
GENERAL								
Housing Starts-All Areas BC**	Thousand	36.4	34.7	32.9	26.2	5.1	5.3	25.8
Housing Starts-USA	Thousand	1,800.9	2,068.3	1,955.8	1,847.7	-12.9	5.8	5.9
Building Permits-BC*	$Million	11,541.5	10,182.9	7,938.7	6,394.2	13.3	28.3	24.2
Residential-BC*	$Million	7,620.7	6,970.8	5,868.9	4,514.2	9.3	18.8	30.0
Non-Residential-BC*	$Million	3,920.8	3,212.1	2,069.8	1,880.1	22.1	55.2	10.1
Retail Sales (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	52,626.9	49,286.3	47,216.6	44,421.0	6.8	4.4	6.3
Wholesale Trade (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	50,724.8	47,277.0	43,497.7	39,658.9	7.3	8.7	9.7
Tourism Room Revenues-BC*	$Thousand	1,822.2	1,690.1	1,592.2	1,486.7	7.8	6.2	7.1
Business Bankruptcies-BC	Number	587	786	922	1,002	-25.3	-14.8	-8.0
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC	Number	7,021	8,173	8,378	9,385	-14.1	-2.4	-10.7
Incorporations-BC*	Number	30,667	28,593	25,428	23,243	7.3	12.4	9.4
Exports Originating in BC*	$Million	33,421.3	34,101.4	30,991.6	28,264.4	-2.0	10.0	9.6
Capital Expenditures-BC	$Million	37,575.8	33,254.2	29,664.7	25,434.1	13.0	12.1	[redacted]
Population-BC (as of July 1)	Thousand	4,310,452	4,257,833	4,203,315	4,155,370	1.2	1.3	[redacted]

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* derived from monthly figures

**derived from quarterly figures

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT ($ MILLIONS)

	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
	2006	2005	2004	2003	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
BRITISH COLUMBIA							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	179,701	168,855	157,540	145,763	6.4	7.2	8.1
Real Gross Domestic Product (chained 1997 $)	150,741	145,501	140,263	134,131	3.6	3.7	4.6
CANADA							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	1,439,291	1,371,425	1,290,788	1,213,408	4.9	6.2	6.4
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 1997 $)	1,189,535	1,157,705	1,124,688	1,088,773	2.7	2.9	3.3
UNITED STATES (Billions $US) **							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	13,194.7	12,433.9	11,685.9	10,960.8	6.1	6.4	6.6
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 2000 $US)	11,319.4	11,003.4	10,675.8	10,301.0	2.9	3.1	3.6

*** US Department of Commerce (actual)*

INTEREST AND EXCHANGE RATES

(Source: Bank of Canada)

	Aug. 29/07	Aug. 22/07	July 25/07	Aug. 30/06
	PERCENT PER ANNUM			
CANADA				
Prime Business Rate	6.25	6.25	6.25	6.00
Bank Rate	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.50
Marketable Government Bond Rate (over 10 years)	4.44	4.49	4.52	4.22
Conventional Mortgages - 1 Year	7.05	7.05	7.05	6.40
- 5 Years	7.24	7.24	7.24	6.85
UNITED STATES				
Prime Rate	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25
EXCHANGE RATES	AVERAGE NOON SPOT RATE			
US Dollar	1.0592	1.0621	1.0425	1.1100
Japanese Yen	0.0092	0.0092	0.0087	0.0095
British Pound	2.1376	2.1153	2.1381	2.1136
Euro	1.4484	1.4374	1.4293	1.4233

FORECASTS

	2007			2008		
	REAL GDP	UNEMP RATE	CPI	REAL GDP	UNEMP RATE	CPI
	% Change	%	% Change	% Change	%	% Change
BRITISH COLUMBIA						
BC Government (February 2007, Budget 2007)	3.1	4.8	2.0	3.0	4.8	2.0
Credit Union Central BC (April 2007)	3.5	4.4	1.6	3.9	4.1	1.8
Conference Board of Canada (July 18, 2007)	2.7	4.1	1.9	3.3	3.9	1.9
Scotia Bank Group (July 19, 2007)	3.2	4.2	na	3.4	4.2	na
TD Bank (May 7, 2007)	3.0	4.3	1.9	3.3	4.5	2.0
CIBC WM Economics (October 31, 2006)	3.6	4.6	2.1	na	na	na
Global Insight (July 2007)	2.7	4.3	2.0	3.0	4.4	2.0
CANADA						
TD Bank (June 20, 2007)	2.5	6.2	2.6	2.5	6.3	2.2
CIBC WM Economics (August 16, 2007)	2.4	6.1	2.4	2.5	6.2	2.5
Global Insight (August 2007)	2.5	6.2	2.3	2.9	6.3	2.3
UNITED STATES						
TD Bank (June 20, 2007)	2.1	4.6	2.8	2.5	5.0	3.0
CIBC WM Economics (August 16, 2007)	1.8	4.6	2.8	2.8	4.8	2.5
Global Insight (August 2007)	2.1	4.6	2.6	2.8	4.8	2.0

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